

## **PROJECT OBJECTIVES, GOALS, AND IMPLEMENTATION (POGI)**

### **FY 2015 Youth Award for Change and Tolerance (Y-ACT)**

**Funding Opportunity Number: ECA-ECAPEC-15-048**

**Office of Citizen Exchanges**

**Youth Programs Division**

The POGI guidelines apply specifically to the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) issued by the Office of Citizen Exchanges, Youth Programs Division for the FY 2015 Youth Award for Change and Tolerance (Y-ACT). Proposals must conform to the NOFO, the Guidelines stated in this document, and the standard Proposal Submission Instructions (PSI). Applications not adhering to the conditions set forth herein may be deemed technically ineligible. These guidelines are specific to the program mentioned above and are IN ADDITION TO the Standard Guidelines outlined in the PSI. If there is a perceived disparity between the standard and program specific Guidelines and the program information supplied in the accompanying NOFO, the NOFO is to be the dominant reference.

#### **I. STATEMENT OF WORK**

The Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs (ECA) and the Public Affairs Sections (PAS) of the U.S. Embassies in the participating countries are supporting the participation of approximately ten international youth, ages 16-22, in an intensive, substantive three-week exchange program in the United States (U.S.). The program will focus on the primary themes of peacebuilding and conflict prevention, including pluralism, social change and tolerance, democracy and governance, and advanced leadership development. The exchange will begin in Washington, D.C. in April 2016 with an award ceremony with Senior Department of State officials and accompanying activities related to the program themes. The participants will then take part (individually or in sub-groups) in a two-week program outside of Washington, D.C. that is specifically tailored to give them the resources and networks to amplify their initiatives in their home countries. The exchange will conclude with a short, substantive visit to Washington, D.C. for program debrief and re-entry activities. ECA reserves the right to adjust and approve the final exchange dates .

Exchange activities should be designed to enhance the participants' knowledge and skill levels on ways democracy is practiced in the U.S., particularly at the grassroots level, including community engagement, minority rights, and the responsibilities of citizens. Activities may include meetings with leaders from selected NGO communities and/or the government and private sector, job shadowing, mini-internships, mentoring, networking opportunities, workshops on advancing social media, communications, and project development and management skills, among others.

**Please note: The participants will be selected by the Department of State in a global nomination process managed by ECA and participating U.S. Embassies. ECA will provide**

the award recipient with the participants' profiles once the final selection has been completed so that the award recipient can tailor the program based on the participants' specific backgrounds and interests.

In a cooperative agreement, the Department of State is substantially involved in program activities above and beyond routine grant monitoring.

In pursuit of the goals outlined above, the award recipient will be responsible for the following:

1) Preparation

- a) Contact participants before the program to provide them with program information, pre-departure materials, and to gather information about their specific needs, in collaboration with the Public Affairs Sections (PAS) from the relevant U.S. Embassies.
- b) Enroll participants in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) health benefits plan for the duration of the exchange, and assist with claims as necessary.
- c) Make all round-trip international (complying with the Fly America Act) and domestic travel arrangements for participants. Arrange for chaperones on all legs of the international flights, in consultation with the U.S. Embassies.
- d) Arrange for ground transportation, group meals, and the disbursement of pocket money.
- e) Hire and train staff, as needed, to accompany participants during the exchange period. Criminal background checks, including a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry, must be conducted for all program staff.
- f) Arrange housing for the participants in a dormitory, hotel, homestay, or some combination thereof and provide staff monitoring of housing arrangements. Carefully recruit, screen, and select diverse local host families to offer home hospitality or homestays (lodging and meals) to the participants during the exchange, if applicable. Criminal background checks, including a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry, must be conducted for members of host families (and others living in the home) who are 18 years or older. Monitor housing arrangements to ensure the health and safety of participants.
- g) Orient participating organizations, staff, and host families (where applicable) to the program's goals and the visitors' cultures and sensitivities.
- h) Make arrangements for interpreters. **Please note:** English language skills will not be a criterion for the selection of participants; therefore, interpretation in more than one language may need to be provided. Applicant organizations should budget for approximately three languages, with a minimum of two interpreters per language. Interpretation should be provided by individuals who have previous experience and/or demonstrated skill in this area. Expenses will include per diem, travel, lodging, and other expenses related to services provided.

2) Exchange Activities

- a) Design, plan, and implement an intensive and substantive three-week exchange program. Activities should be geared toward advanced training in peacebuilding and conflict

prevention, including pluralism, social change and tolerance, democracy and governance, and advanced leadership development. The exchange must include creative and interactive activities, practical experiences, and other hands-on opportunities that will help meet program goals. Activities should support the participants' existing efforts and expand their networks. Additionally, activities should provide participants from several countries the opportunity to interact, share ideas and strategies, and collaborate on issues related to program themes.

- b) In close consultation and collaboration with Department of State Officials, plan and implement one week of high-profile activities in Washington, D.C. at the beginning of the exchange. The Washington, D.C. component will include an award ceremony with Senior Department Officials and other related events. The award recipient should be prepared to organize and arrange meetings and discussions with leaders from selected NGO communities, government and the private sector, visits on Capitol Hill, presentations, or other requested activities.
  - c) Arrange appropriate community, cultural, social, and civic activities to balance the schedule.
  - d) Develop and implement a plan to monitor the participants' safety and well-being during the exchange and to create opportunities for participants to share potential issues and resolve them promptly. The award recipient will be required to provide proper staff supervision to ensure that the participants have safe and pedagogically rich program. Staff will assist the participants with cultural adjustments, provide societal context to enhance learning, and counsel participants as needed. Criminal background checks, including a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry, must be conducted for all program staff. Award recipients must inform ECA and PAS of any significant health or safety issues affecting program participants.
  - e) Conduct a welcome orientation for participants upon their arrival in the United States to review program goals, objectives, and expectations.
  - f) Design and implement a short, substantive visit to Washington, D.C. at the conclusion of the exchange for program debrief and re-entry activities. Closing sessions should summarize exchange activities, prepare participants for their return home, and plan for their future as alumni.
- 3) Follow-on activities
- a) In collaboration with ECA and participating U.S. Embassies, provide follow-on support to participants upon their return home. This should include organizing activities that aim to reinforce values and skills imparted during the exchange program and help them apply what they have learned to serve their schools and communities. Follow-on activities may include web-based components. Exchange participants should return home equipped with resources to help them expand their networks and amplify their existing work (Please see "Follow-on Activities for Alumni" section on page 6 for more information).
  - b) Present creative and effective ways to address project themes, for both program participants and their peers, as a means to amplify program impact.
  - a) To amplify program impact, proposals should present creative and effective ways to address the project themes. Applicants should propose a robust plan that allows

participants to expand their knowledge in social change in the United States in a creative, memorable, and hands-on ways.

- b) Support alumni in making presentations or preparing articles to share their experiences once they return home.
- 4) Design and implement an evaluation plan that assesses the impact of the program (See section D.3.j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation of the NOFO solicitation).
- 5) Work in consultation with ECA and PAS in the implementation of the program, provide timely reporting of progress to ECA and PAS, and comply with financial and program reporting requirements.
- 6) Manage all financial aspects of the program, including stipend disbursements to the participants and management of sub-award relationships with U.S. organizations.

Department of State activities and responsibilities for all program options listed in this document are as follows:

- 1) Provide advice and assistance in the execution of all program components.
- 2) Manage overseas participant recruitment and selection, provide pre-departure briefings, and oversee follow-on activities in coordination with the award recipient.
- 3) Issue DS-2019 forms and J-1 visas. All foreign participants will travel on a U.S. Government designation for the J Exchange Visitor Program.
- 4) Facilitate interaction within the Department of State, to include ECA, the regional bureaus, and overseas posts.
- 5) Arrange meetings with Department of State officials in Washington, D.C., including substantial involvement in planning and implementing the awards ceremony.
- 6) Approve all printed or web-based program materials, including publicity materials, and the final calendar of exchange activities.
- 7) Monitor and evaluate the program through regular communication with the award recipient and possibly one or more site visits, as necessary.
- 8) Perform an annual performance evaluation/review.

## **II. PROGRAM SPECIFIC GUIDELINES**

**Participants:** The award recipient will not be involved in participant selection. Approximately ten youth will be selected by the Department of State through a global nomination process managed by ECA and participating U.S. Embassies. Participants will be between the ages of 16 and 22, though exceptional candidates outside of this age group will be considered on a case by case basis.

Selected candidates will:

- 1) Have played an active, positive and effective role in societal transformation.
- 2) Have taken action to publically promote social change and tolerance through campaigns, social engagement, or other creative initiatives.

- 3) Have amplified alternative and/or positive narratives that support positive social change in challenging environments.

**Flight Chaperones:** The award recipient, in consultation with the U.S. Embassies in participating countries, should plan to identify and provide flight chaperones to accompany minor participants under the age of 18 to and from the host site in the United States to ensure their safety and assist them in navigating airports. Flight chaperones are not expected to have any additional role in the program. However, minor participants will need to have adult supervision at all times during the U.S.-based exchange program.

Flight chaperones must:

- Be experienced travelers.
- Have proficiency in the participants' native language.
- Be responsible individuals.
- Be able to calmly and effectively handle challenging situations (such as canceled flights).
- Be supportive of the youth participants.

Examples of potential flight chaperones include:

- An Embassy employee (e.g. American Officer, EFM, or FSN) from any of the sections at post.
- A teacher/educator.
- A staff member of a partner organization.
- A non-governmental organization (NGO) staff member or community leader who work with youth.

International travel: The applicant should describe within its proposal plans for arranging the participants' international travel, in consultation with participating U.S. Embassies, and include appropriate costs in the budget. The proposal should also include the proposed dates of the exchange to take place in April 2016. However, ECA reserves the right to adjust and approve the final exchange dates.

**Please note:** The flight chaperones will accompany the minor participants on all legs of the international flights to and from their home country to the site of program activity in the U.S. **Travel expenses such as airline tickets, per diem, and lodging for up to two days should be included within proposal budgets.**

Pre-Departure Orientation: PAS staff will provide participants with a pre-departure orientation, reviewing the details of the program, cross-cultural issues, and travel and financial matters. The award recipient-s will provide pre-departure materials and information about the U.S. program electronically in support of this orientation prior to the participants' departure from home.

Welcome Orientation: The award recipient will design and conduct a welcome orientation for the participants to introduce them to their host communities and prepare them for the activities

ahead. The orientation will include a general political, historical, educational, and cultural introduction to the U.S., a review of the objectives and themes of the program, as well as practical and administrative information.

**U.S. Program:** U.S. Department of State officials will design and plan an award ceremony in Washington, D.C., and the award recipient, in consultation with the U.S. Department of State, will be responsible for implementing the related events in Washington, D.C. and exchange activities in other proposed U.S. cities. Program activities should aim to develop open dialogues among the participants through which they can develop strategies to work together to help solve some of the common challenges they face as leaders of their communities. ECA urges applicants to present innovative, resourceful, and effective programming ideas. Applicants should justify their choices by explaining how their program plan will meet the stated goals.

Applicants should propose a plan to divide the participants individually or into smaller cohorts for most of the exchange activities based on their individual profiles and interests. Applicants are also encouraged to hold the welcome and closing orientations in Washington, D.C. with the entire delegation, as opposed to individual sessions.

**Housing Accommodations:** During the exchange, participants may reside in a hotel, dormitory, homestay with an American family (i.e. weekend stay or longer), or some combination thereof. If using homestays, the proposal must describe plans for recruiting and matching participants with families in which one family member speaks the participant's native language.

**For homestays:** The award recipient must have a clear and detailed host family recruitment, screening, and selection process. They must also provide the families with an orientation prior to their exchange participants' arrival which emphasizes the program's goals. Screening needs to include a visit to the home to meet all members of the household to ensure that the host family is capable of providing a comfortable and nurturing home environment. Criminal background checks, including a search of the Department of Justice's National Sex Offender Public Registry, must be conducted for members of host families (and others living in the home) who are 18 years or older. The orientation will provide families with detailed information on the exchange program, the parameters of their participation, duties and obligations, and information on cultural differences and practices.

ECA encourages diversity in host family recruitment and selection. Host families may represent diversity in family size and structure, race and ethnicity, socio-economic status, religion, and geography. Exchange participants should be afforded private space in the home. While exchange participants may share a room with someone of a similar age and the same gender, they must have their own bed. Participants may be placed with host families as singles or in pairs. Host families need to have adequate financial resources to undertake hosting obligations.

**Follow-on Activities for Alumni:** The award recipient should propose follow-on activities that further support alumni and help amplify the impact of their existing initiatives in their home

communities. This may include engaging alumni in advanced online trainings, providing educational and resource materials, serving as a resource or advisor, and/or working with the relevant U.S. Embassy and to help nurture on-going contact with the participants. Alumni programming in the form of seminars, newsletters, and online platforms may also serve to maximize and extend the exchange program's benefits. Follow-on plans should take into account that Internet access may be limited in some areas. All alumni contact information gathered by the award recipient on behalf of this program must be made available to the Department of State. Please refer to the PSI for additional guidance.

Evaluation: The Government Performance and Results Act (GPRA) of 1993 requires that federal agencies measure the results of their programs in meeting performance goals. The proposal should demonstrate the applicant's plan to measure the medium-term impact of the program. The follow-on activities will provide an opportunity to assess the impact of the exchanges on the participants, to determine how their attitudes have changed, and to evaluate the acquisition of knowledge and skills associated with program themes. (See section D.3.j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation of the NOFO solicitation).

Other notes: The award recipient is responsible for all components of the program outlined in this document. The Bureau requires the recipient organization to communicate with ECA and the Public Affairs Sections of the relevant U.S. Embassy on a regular basis about program activities. The recipient must also inform the ECA Program Officer of their progress at each stage of the project's implementation in a timely fashion, and it must also obtain approval of any significant program changes in advance of their implementation. All materials and correspondence related to the program will acknowledge this as a program of the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the U.S. Department of State. The Bureau will retain copyright use of and be allowed to distribute materials related to this program as it sees fit.

## **PROPOSAL CONTENTS**

Applicants should submit a complete and thorough proposal describing the program in a convincing and comprehensive manner. Since there is no opportunity for applicants to meet with reviewing officials, the proposal should respond to the criteria set forth in the solicitation and other guidelines as clearly as possible.

Proposals should address succinctly, but completely, the elements described below and must follow all format requirements.

**NOTE:** Proposals submitted through Grants.gov may only be submitted in the following formats:

- Microsoft Word
- Microsoft Excel
- Adobe Portable Document Format (PDF)
- ASCII Text
- Joint Photographic Experts Group (JPEG images)

Proposals should include the following items under the section headings in the GrantSolutions Application Checklist. All documents should be appropriately and clearly titled.

### **Online Forms**

- SF-424, “Application for Federal Assistance”
- SF-424A, Budget Information – Non-Construction Programs
- SF-424B, “Assurances - Nonconstruction Programs”
- Include other attachments, if applicable, such as indirect agreements, form 990, SF-LLL, etc.

### **Program Narrative**

#### *Executive Summary (One page)*

In one double-spaced page, provide the following information about the project:

- 1) Name of applicant organization
- 2) Beginning and ending dates of the program
- 3) Nature of activity and venues
- 4) Scope and Goals
- 5) Number and description of participants
- 6) Anticipated results (short and long-term)
- 7) Funding level requested from the Bureau, total program cost, total cost-sharing from applicant and other sources

#### *Narrative*

In 20 double-spaced, single sided pages with one inch margins (size 11 or 12 font), provide a detailed description of the project addressing the areas listed below. In the narrative, applicants should not only describe major program activities but also explain and justify their programmatic choices.

- 1) **Vision and Motivation:** Describe the project objectives, goals, and the desired outcomes, i.e., the knowledge, skills, and/or attitudinal changes that the participants will acquire. Also describe the applicant’s motivation for applying to conduct the project.
- 2) **Project Activities:** Describe the components of the exchange and how they relate to project themes, including project planning, orientations, educational activities, cultural activities, meetings, site visits, community service, and the closing session. A detailed outline of the three-week exchange should be included as an appendix. Also, describe follow-up support activities.
- 3) **Travel, Housing, and Other Logistics:** Detail how the applicant will arrange international travel (in compliance with the Fly America Act); domestic travel; housing arrangements and homestays (specifically describe recruitment, screening, and monitoring), if applicable; ground transportation; stipend



- disbursement; and relevant administrative matters.
- 4) **Participant Monitoring:** Detail how the applicant will assure the well-being, safety, and security of program participants during all stages of the program.
  - 5) **Program Evaluation:** In the submitted proposal, applicants should include a plan describing how success in meeting the stated goals of the program will be measured and reported. ECA recommends that the proposal include a draft survey questionnaire or other technique. (See section D.3.j. Program Monitoring and Evaluation of the NOFO solicitation for more information).
  - 6) **Diversity:** Explain how the program managers will proactively support diversity in program content, demonstrating how diversity can contribute to a vibrant civil society. Diversity should be defined broadly to include geographic, urban/rural, ethnic, racial, socio-economic, sexual orientation and religious diversity
  - 7) **Institutional Capacity and Project Management:** Outline the applicant organization's capacity to conduct an exchange program of this nature, focusing on three areas of competency: (1) Provision of advanced leadership and civic education programming. (2) Professional development and age-appropriate programming for youth. (3) Experience conducting international youth exchanges. Describe the program staffing (individuals and responsibilities), qualifications, structure, and resources. Please include this information for primary partner organizations as well.
  - 8) **Work Plan/Schedule:** Outline the phases of the project planning and implementation for the entire award period. Provide a draft schedule of daily activities of the exchanges in an appendix.

#### **Additional Information to be submitted:**

##### Detailed Budget

The level of funding available for this program is \$400,000.

The Bureau reserves the right to reduce, revise, or increase proposal budgets in accordance with the needs of the program and the availability of funds.

The available funding may be used to support the program and administrative costs necessary to implement the program as described in this solicitation. Please submit a comprehensive line item budget, as stated in the PSI. An explanatory budget narrative must also be included.

Suggested program costs include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Staff travel.
- Participant travel (international, domestic, ground transportation, passport and visa fees).
- Flight chaperone travel.
- Educational materials.

- Orientations.
- Cultural and social activities.
- Meeting costs.
- Lodging, if not in homestays.
- Food (primarily group meals).
- Interpretation services.
- Follow-on support.
- Evaluation.
- Pocket money for participants' incidental expenses.
- Other justifiable expenses directly related to supporting program activities.

Significant cost sharing is expected and will enhance the proposal. Stipends for host families are not allowed as a grant-funded or cost-share item. While there is no rigid ratio of administrative to program costs, the Bureau urges applicants to keep administrative costs as low and reasonable as possible. Proposals should show strong administrative cost-sharing contributions from the applicant, the in-country partner, and other sources.

Maximum limits on grant funding are as follows: Books and educational materials allowance-\$100 per participant; Conference room rental costs-\$250 per day per room; Consultant fees and honoraria-\$250/day; Cultural allowance-\$150 per participant; Per diem-standard government rates; Evaluation costs- 3% of the grant. Organizations are encouraged to cost-share any rates that exceed these amounts.

Please note that there are no fees for the J-1 visas that foreign participants will use to enter the United States. Applicants should budget for program participants to travel to the U.S. Embassy for visa interviews and should budget to cover the cost of participants' passports, if necessary. Applicants should contact the embassy or a consulate of the host country to find out their visa requirements for U.S. citizens, and should budget for participants' visas, if needed. Exchange participants will be enrolled in the Bureau's Accident and Sickness Program for Exchanges (ASPE) to provide them with health benefits during the exchange. This cost does not need to be included in the budget. More information on ASPE is available at <http://www.usdos.sevencorners.com>.

Please refer to the PSI for allowable costs and complete budget guidelines and formatting instructions.

#### Letters of Endorsement

Include pledges to participate in the program's implementation from significant partner organizations, including those receiving a sub-award.

#### Resumes and CVs

Resumes of all program staff should be included in the submission. No one resume should exceed two pages.

### Attachments/appendices

Please limit attachments/appendices to those materials essential for understanding the proposed program, such as a draft schedule or evaluation questionnaires. Extensive attachments will detract from your proposal.

### First Time Applicant Attachments, if applicable

First time applicant organizations and organizations which have not received an assistance award (grant or cooperative agreement) from the Bureau during the past three (3) years, must submit as an attachment to this form the following: (a) one copy of their Charter OR Articles of Incorporation; (b) a list of the current Board of Directors; and (c) current financial statements. Note: The Bureau retains the right to ask for additional documentation of those items included on this form.

**Please note:** All applicants for ECA federal assistance awards must include in their application the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees, regardless of amount of compensation). In fulfilling this requirement, applicants must submit information in one of the following ways:

- Those who file Internal Revenue Service Form 990, "Return of Organization Exempt From Income Tax," must include a copy of relevant portions of this form.
- Those who do not file IRS Form 990 must submit information above in the format of their choice.

As part of final program reporting requirements, award recipients will also be required to submit a one-page document, derived from their program reports, listing and describing their grant activities. For award recipients, the names of directors and/or senior executives (current officers, trustees, and key employees), as well as the one- page description of grant activities, will be transmitted by the State Department to OMB, along with other information required by the Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act (FFATA), and will be made available to the public by the Office of Management and Budget on its USASpending.gov website as part of ECA's FFATA reporting requirements.

## **APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

The NOFO indicates the date the complete proposal is due and the manner in which proposals must be submitted. There are NO EXCEPTIONS to this deadline. For further information regarding this program or the competition, contact the Youth Programs Division Program Officer Tenimba Morgan, (202) 632-6079; MorganTS@state.gov.